

REMARKS

Applicants have carefully reviewed and considered the Examiner's Action mailed August 21, 2008. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the comments set forth below.

By this Amendment, claims 10 and 17-18 are amended and non-elected claims 1-9 are canceled. Accordingly, claims 10-18 are pending in the instant application.

Claims 10-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the recitation of the "wherein" clause in claim 10 was unclear, and the Examiner requested which part of the semiconductor component is applied with the dielectric in claim 17. By the foregoing amendments to the claims, Applicants have clarified the "wherein" clause in claim 10 and amended claim 10 to define a "back side of the substrate" and the dielectric of claim 17 is applied to the back side of the substrate. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 10-18 are fully definite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Claims 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,909,626 to Kobayashi in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,294,825 to Nakagawa et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Nakagawa". This rejection is traversed.

Kobayashi discloses a semiconductor device with a vertical-type power element between the front side and the back side of the substrate and a region for a control circuit extending from the front side of the substrate. The region for the control circuit is isolated in the vertical direction by a buried insulation layer (3) and in the lateral direction by trenches extending from the front side of the device to the buried insulation layer (3).

The secondary reference to Nakagawa discloses several circuits in isolated regions of a substrate. The isolation comprises an insulating layer parallel to the surface and vertical trenches extending from the surface to the insulating layer for the isolation in the lateral direction. But, Nakagawa, like Kobayashi, does not disclose the recited at least one first vertical power component extending from a front side to a back side of a silicon substrate which is separated by a trench extending from the front side to the back side of the silicon substrate from at least one lateral, active component of the claimed invention.

The recited trenches of the claimed invention extend from the front side of the substrate (1) to the back side of the substrate. See Figures 1c), 3a) and 3b) of the present application. In addition, claim 10 has been amended to clarify that the “at least one lateral, active component” is a required component that is not optional. It is the second vertical component (10) which is optional.

Neither Nakagawa, nor Kobayashi show a vertical power component and a lateral, active component arranged eccentrically or concentrically about a common point of reference on the silicon substrate and separated by the recited trench as claimed by Applicants. Accordingly, even if combined, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have reasonably achieved the claimed invention. It is only with the hindsight knowledge obtained by reading Applicants' own specification that the invention can be reconstructed. It is respectfully requested that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

It is noted that claims 17-18 were not rejected under prior art and thus, it is requested that these claims be indicated as allowable in the next Office Action.

Accordingly, it is submitted that independent claim 10 and dependent claims 11-18 are patentable over any combination of the prior art of record. Consequently, withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) and allowance of claims 10-18 is requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a conference would advance the prosecution of this application, he is encouraged to telephone the undersigned counsel to arrange such a conference.

Dated: December 19, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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